

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough consideration provided the present application. Claims 1-4 and 6-11 are now present in the application. Claims 1 and 6-9 have been amended. Claims 5 and 12-16 have been cancelled. Claim 1 is independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that dependent claims 5-11 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants greatly appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter by the Examiner.

By the present amendment, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 5, as described hereinbelow.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4 and 12-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Inui, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2001/0025969. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As mentioned, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of dependent claim 5, which was indicated by the Examiner as including allowable subject matter. Accordingly, it is believed that independent claim 1 and its dependent claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but merely to show the state of the prior art, no further comments are necessary with respect thereto.

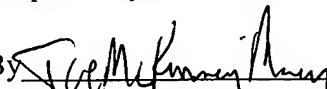
It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Joe McKinney Muncy, Registration No. 32,334 at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Joe McKinney Muncy
Registration No.: 32,334
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant

